

05-984 FLD 1 - 2000

No. _____

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**In the
Supreme Court of the United States**

ROY L. BROWN,

Petitioner,

v.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Respondent.

**On Petition for a Writ of Certiorari to the United
States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit**

PETITION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI

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QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

I. Does Petitioner's waiver of appeal bar appeal based on a sentence assessed in violation of the U. S. Constitution, Sixth Amendment when the waiver, by its terms, allows appeal of "any punishment in excess of a statutory maximum."

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
QUESTION FOR REVIEW	i
PARTIES TO PROCEEDINGS	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
INDEX OF AUTHORITIES	v
OPINION BELOW	1
STATEMENT OF JURISDICTION	1
CONSTITUTIONAL AND STATUTORY PROVISIONS INVOLVED	2
STATEMENT OF THE CASE	2
QUESTION FOR REVIEW	3
Does Petitioner's waiver of appeal bar appeal based on a sentence assessed in violation of the U. S. Constitution, Sixth Amendment when the waiver, by its terms, allows appeal of "any punishment in excess of a statutory maximum."	3
REASONS FOR REVIEW	4
CONCLUSION	7
APPENDIX	1a

Appendix A

**United States Court of Appeals For
the Fifth Circuit Opinion on Petition for
Rehearing**

September 27, 2005 1a

Appendix B

**United States Court of Appeals For
the Fifth Circuit Order Denying Petition
for Rehearing**

November 4, 2005 3a

Appendix C

**United States Court of Appeals For
the Sixth Circuit, *United States v. Luebbert***

June 1, 2005 5a

INDEX OF AUTHORITIES

Cases	Page
<i>Blakely v. Washington</i> , 124 S.Ct. 2531 (2004)	3, 5
<i>Halbert v. Michigan</i> , 125 S.Ct. 2582 (2005)	6
<i>United States v. Bond</i> , 2005 WL 1459641 3 (5 th Cir. June 21, 2005)	5
<i>United States v. Booker</i> , 125 S.Ct. 738 (2005)	3, 5, 6
<i>United States v. Luebbett</i> , 411 F.3d 602 (6 th Cir. 2005)	5, 6
<i>United States v. Martinez</i> , 263 F.3d 436 (5 th Cir. 2001)	5
<i>United States v. McKinney</i> , 406 F.3d 744 (5 th Cir. 2005)	5
<i>United States v. Pineiro</i> , 377 F.3d 464 (5 th Cir. 2004)	3

Codes and Rules

15 U.S.C. §77q(a)	1, 4
15 U.S.C. §77x	1, 4
18 U.S.C. §1344	1, 4
18 U.S.C. §3742	4, 6

28 U.S.C. §1254(1)	1
28 U.S.C. §2255	4

Constitutional Provisions

Amendment V, U.S. Const.	1, 6
Amendment VI, U.S. Const.	1

Sentencing Guidelines

USSG §2B1.1	1
USSG §2B1.1(b)(1)(K)	1
USSG §2B1.1(b)(2)(A)(i)	1
USSG §2B1.1(b)(8)(C)	1
USSG §2B1.1(b)(12)(A)	1
USSG §2F1.1(b)(5)(C)	4
USSG §3A1.1	
USSG §3B1.1(c)	1

Petitioner, ROY L. BROWN, hereby petitions for a writ of certiorari to review the opinion of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit (entered September 27, 2005) affirming Petitioner's conviction and sentence for securities fraud in violation of 15 U.S.C. §77q(a) and 77x and bank fraud in violation of 18 U.S.C. §1344. A Petition for Rehearing was filed on October 11, 2005, and denied on November 4, 2005.

OPINION BELOW

The opinion of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit dated September 27, 2005, is styled *United States v. Roy L. Brown*, No. 03-11196, and is unpublished. A copy of this opinion is found at Appendix A. Petition for Rehearing was denied on November 4, 2005, and is found at Appendix B.

STATEMENT OF JURISDICTION

The Court's jurisdiction is invoked pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1254(1).

On December 17, 2004, the Court of Appeals affirmed the judgment of the District Court. Petitioner subsequently filed a Petition for Rehearing. On September 27, 2005, the Court of Appeals granted the Petition for Rehearing, withdrew the earlier opinion and substituted a new opinion. On October 1, 2005, Petitioner filed a Petition for Rehearing of the new opinion. On November 4, 2005, the Court of Appeals denied that Petition for Rehearing. This Petition for Writ of Certiorari is from the Court of Appeals opinion dated September 27, 2005, and the subsequent denial of the Petition for Rehearing.

CONSTITUTIONAL AND STATUTORY PROVISIONS INVOLVED

Amendment V, U. S. Const.

No person shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law.

Amendment VI, U. S. Const.

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On May 28, 2003, Mr. Brown pled guilty to one count of securities fraud and one count of bank fraud. On November 3, 2003, Mr. Brown was sentenced to 60 months imprisonment on Count 1 and 136 months on Count 2 to run concurrent with each other.

The guideline calculations that ultimately led to the 136 month sentence were as follows:

- Base offense level under §2B1.1	6
- Loss Amount of \$9,757,063 §2B1.1(b)(1)(K)	+20
- More than 10 victims §2B1.1(b)(2)(A)(i)	+2
- Sophisticated means §2B1.1(b)(8)(C)	+2
- 1,000,000 in gross receipts from §2B1.1(b)(12)(A)	+2
- Leader/Organizer - §3B1.1(c)	+2
- Acceptance of responsibility	<u>-3</u>

Total Offense Level:	31
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With a criminal history category of II, the guideline range was 121 to 151 months. The District Court's sentence was within the range at 151 months.

The appeal in the case at bar argued under *Blakely v. Washington*, 124 S.Ct. 2531 (2004) that Mr. Brown was sentenced in violation of his rights under the U.S. Const., amend. VI. On December 17, 2004, the Court issued a brief, per curiam opinion, stating that this argument was foreclosed by *United States v. Pineiro*, 377 F.3d 464 (5th Cir. 2004)(holding *Blakely* does not apply to the United States Sentencing Guidelines). However, on January 12, 2005, the United States Supreme Court issued *United States v. Booker*, 125 S.Ct. 738, 748-756 (2005) which found *Blakely* did apply to the United States Sentencing Guidelines and held that the Sentencing Guidelines are to be advisory, rather than mandatory. *Booker* expressly overruled *Pineiro* and required the Court of Appeals to review Appellant's claims in light of *Booker*. This fact was brought to the Court of Appeals attention by way of a Petition for Rehearing. However, rather than addressing the merits of Petitioner's argument, the Court of Appeals looked to the waiver of appeal language in the Petitioner's plea agreement and dismissed the appeal.

QUESTION FOR REVIEW

Does Petitioner's waiver of appeal bar appeal based on a sentence assessed in violation of the U. S. Constitution, Sixth Amendment when the waiver, by its terms, allows appeal of "any punishment in excess of a statutory maximum."

REASONS FOR REVIEW

Petitioner entered a guilty plea in the District Court pursuant to a plea agreement. The plea agreement contained the following provision:

"Waiver of Appeal

8. The defendant hereby expressly waives the right to appeal his sentence on any ground, including any appeal right conferred by 18 U.S.C. §3742, and the defendant further agrees not to contest his sentence in any post-conviction proceeding, including but not limited to a proceeding under 28 U.S.C. §2255. The defendant, however, reserves the right to appeal or contest the following: a) any punishment imposed in excess of a statutory maximum, b) any punishment to the extent it constitutes an upward departure from the guideline range deemed most applicable by the sentencing court; c) arithmetic errors in the guidelines calculations; d) any application of USSG §2F1.1(b)(5)(C) in conjunction with an application of USSG §3B1.3 in calculating the guidelines if the court applies the 1998 version of the United States Sentencing Guidelines; e) any application of USSG §3A1.1 in calculating the guidelines; and f) a claim of ineffective assistance of counsel."

The Court of Appeals opinion dismissing the appeal simply stated:

"Brown appeals following his guilty plea to securities fraud, in violation of 15 U.S.C. §§77q(a) and 77x, and bank fraud, in violation of 18 U.S.C. §1344. Brown pleaded guilty pursuant to a written

plea agreement that contained a waiver of the right to appeal. We may examine Brown's plea agreement sua sponte to determine whether we may hear his claims. United States v. Martinez, 263 F.3d 436, 438 (5th Cir. 2001). We conclude that the appeal is barred by the plain language of Brown's knowing and voluntary appeal waiver in the plea agreement. See United States v. Bond, ___ F.3d ___, No. 04-41125, 2005 WL 1459641, at *3-4 (5th Cir. June 21, 2005); United States v. McKinney, 406 F.3d 744, 746-47 (5th Cir. 2005).

PETITION FOR REHEARING GRANTED; APPEAL DISMISSED."

While the majority of opinions from the Courts of Appeals have ruled that waiver of appeal language similar to this does not allow appeal based on *Booker* error, this is not a unanimous view. In *United States v. Luebbert*, 411 F.3d 602 (6th Cir. 2005), Judge Moore dissented from a dismissal of an appeal under similar circumstances. Judge Moore's opinion directly and clearly addressed the reasons why this waiver of appeal language should not bar appeal based on a sentence assessed in violation of the Sixth Amendment as interpreted in *Booker*. Based on the importance of this dissenting opinion, it is set out in its entirety under Appendix C. As Judge Moore stated, the language "any sentence imposed in excess of the statutory maximum" is not without ambiguity. This language could be reasonably interpreted to allow an appeal of a sentence in excess of the statutory maximum as interpreted in *Booker* and *Blakely v. Washington*, 542 U.S. 296, 124 S.Ct. 2531, 159 L.Ed.2d 403 (2004).

In fact, Judge Moore is correct. Since this Court has clearly defined statutory maximum for these purposes in *Blakely* and *Booker* as a "sentence a judge may impose solely